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SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/RUS (SZPILA), EUR/WE AND GEORGIA TASK FORCE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/25/2018

TAGS: [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [RU](#) [GG](#) [SP](#)

SUBJECT: SPAIN RESPONDS TO POSSIBLE RUSSIAN RECOGNITION OF  
SEPARATIST REGIONS

REF: A. STATE 90978

[B](#). MADRID 897

[C](#). MADRID 916

Classified By: DCM Arnold Chacon for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) On August 25, Polcouns spoke with Juan Sell, Chief of Staff to Spanish Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Angel Lossada. Sell said Spain's position was very clear - Spain supported the territorial integrity of Georgia. Likewise, Spain supported the efforts of France as EU President and Finland as OSCE chair. Sell noted Spain was particularly sensitive when it came to issues of separatism (no doubt alluding to the Basques and Catalans). Sell, who recently returned to Spain after a tour in Moscow, said the Duma had in the past called for recognition of the separatist regions or at least came close to doing so. Sell said such a call by the Duma was one thing, but he certainly hoped the Russian Government would not take such a negative step. As far as pressing Russia not to recognize Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Sell acknowledged our request and said he would discuss it with Lossada.

[1](#)2. (C) The newly appointed Spanish MFA Deputy Political Director Ricardo Lopez Aranda echoed this message and stated to poloff that persuading Russia to refrain from recognizing the separatist regions would be an important part of an international message. Lopez stated Spain will participate in next week's European Council meeting and will likely follow EU plans regarding peacekeeping or monitoring action in the region.  
Aguirre